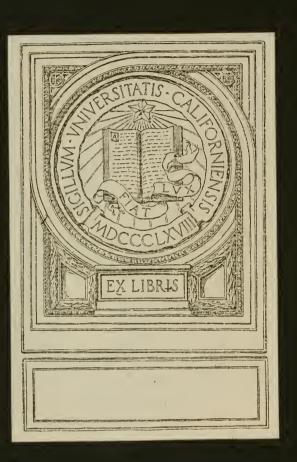


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THE ESTABLISHMENT

OF

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SOME NOTES

FOR THE GUIDANCE OF LIBRARY COMMITTEES

LONDON

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THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

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THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION was founded on 5th October, 1877, at the First International Library Conference, held in the London Institution under the presidency of the late Mr. J. Winter Jones, then Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

The objects of the Association as set forth in the Charter are:

(1) To unite all persons engaged or interested in Library work by holding conferences and meetings for the discussion of bibliographical questions and matters affecting Libraries or their regulation or management or otherwise.

(2) To promote the better administration of Libraries.

(3) To promote whatever may tend to the improvement of the position and the qualifications of Librarians.

(4) To promote the adoption of the Public Libraries Acts.

(5) To promote the Establishment of Reference and Lending Libraries

for use by the public.

(6) To watch legislation affecting Public Libraries, and to assist in the promotion of such further legislation as may be considered necessary for the regulation and management or extension of Public Libraries.

(7) To promote and encourage bibliographical study and research.

(8) To form, collect, collate and publish (in the form of Transactions, Journals, or otherwise) information of service or of interest to the Fellows and Members of the Association, or for the promotion of the objects of the Corporation.

(9) To collect and maintain a Library and Museum.

(10) To hold Examinations in Librarianship and to issue certificates of efficiency.

(11) To do all such lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.

The Association does for Libraries what they could not do individually without great cost and trouble. The principal Act of 1892 was the work of the Association, and since then its Legislation Committee has introduced several Amendments, and is now promoting a new Bill. The Association also under-

takes to advise its members gratis on all questions of Library Law.

Through the instrumentality of the Association, the London School of Economics and Political Science (University of London) has created a Department of Library Economics in which technical instruction in Librarianship Correspondence Classes are also held under the auspices of the The Association holds Examinations and issues Certificates in Association. each subject to those who satisfy the Examiners, and a Diploma to those who hold Certificates in all the subjects, and fulfil certain other conditions.

The official organ of the Association is *The Library Association Record*, which is sent post free to Fellows and Members. In this magazine (which is edited by the Publications Committee of the Council) appear the papers read at Annual and Monthly Meetings, articles on Bibliography, Library and Literary

The Annual Subscription, payable in advance on 1st January, is One Guinea, which may be commuted by a Life-subscription of Fifteen Guineas. Candidates for membership can be elected at any meeting.

Library Assistants are eligible for election as Associates, at an Annual Subscription of Half-a-Guinea, which entitles them to all the privileges of

Membership except those of voting and holding office.

Libraries and other Institutions are also admitted to membership, upon payment of an Annual Subscription of One Guinea, when they receive the journal, and each is entitled to nominate a delegate, who, if approved by the Council, may attend the Meetings of the Association, and, on behalf of the Institution which he represents, exercise all the privileges of ordinary membership.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

THE ESTABLISHMENT

OF

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SOME NOTES

FOR THE GUIDANCE OF LIBRARY COMMITTEES



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PREFACE.

In many districts public libraries are carrying on their work at great disadvantage owing to mistakes made by library authorities in the early stages of the establishment of their libraries. This pamphlet is issued by the Library Association in the hope that similar errors may be avoided in the future in places where the Public Libraries Acts have not yet been put into operation.

It has not been considered necessary to deal with the preliminary steps connected with the adoption of the Acts and the raising of loans, as these matters are usually carried out by the Clerk to the Local Authority who generally has means at hand of finding out the proper method of dealing with them. Should, however, information on these subjects be desired, it may be obtained on application to the Honorary Secretary of the Library Association, 24 Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.

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In this new book, whilst the **CLASSIFICATION**, as being now so familiar to Librarians and Students, has been retained unaltered, a great many new **SUB-CLASSES** have been added with their bibliographies, and the system of cross-references has been even more widely introduced. The **INDEX**, which will be absolutely complete as regards both authors and subjects down to the smallest details, will be in one alphabet (as was the case in "The Reader's Guide").

BOOKS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

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Slang Dictionary, by FARMER.

Dictionary of Archaic Words, etc., by Halliwell.

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English Quotations, Robinson Smith.

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ENGLISH LIBRARY, f'cap 8vo, cloth gilt, each 2s. 6d.

BAKER (E. A.), History in Fiction: a Classified Bibliography. Vol. i., British Novels; ii., American and Foreign.

BROWN (J. D.), Manual of Practical Bibliography.

The Small Library.

HARRIS (W. J.), First English Translations of Foreign Classics. [In preparation.

RAE (W. S. C.), Practical Library Administration. [In preparation. SAVAGE (E. A.), The Story of Libraries.

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

THE following suggestions have been drawn up mainly for the guidance of library committees in towns and districts where the product of the library rate is not large, though many of the suggestions will be found useful to library authorities in larger districts also.

Election and Composition of Library Committees.

The election of the library committee should take place immediately after the adoption of the Public Libraries Acts. The committee should be composed of members of the local council, and of co-opted members as provided for in the Public Libraries Act, 1892, sect. 15. In Scotland local authorities are required by section 18 of the Consolidation Act of 1887 to appoint not less than ten nor more than twenty members to be an independent library committee of whom one-half shall be members of the local authority, and the other half householders who are not members of the local authority. Co-opted members should be selected for their local knowledge, their knowledge of books, and their interest in educational matters generally.

Relation of the Library Committee to the Local Council.

The co-opted members of the committee are (except in Scotland) usually fewer than the elected members of the the local authority. With the latter constituting a clear majority, the committee should be constituted a reporting committee, and be invested with a free hand in the control of the expenditure of the library rate; this delegation of

powers is provided for in section 15 of the Public Libraries Act, 1892. If it be thought desirable to reserve certain questions for the approval of the council, e.g., questions of site, building, or appointment of staff, it should be stated in the resolution under which the library committee is appointed that these matters are to be reported to the council as recommendations, and distinct from other matters which would only be for the information of the council.

Levying of the Library Rate.

The earliest opportunity should be taken of levying the penny rate after the adoption of the Acts. Attention to this point will frequently make the difference at a later stage between a satisfactory and an unsatisfactory financial position. Even though there be unavoidable delay in connection with the choice of site, planning of building, etc., the fund resulting from the accumulation of the penny rate will be found very useful for the purchase of furniture, fittings and books, and will reduce the amount of loans necessary for these purposes, thus leaving free as much as possible the annual product of the rate for ordinary maintenance expenditure.

The Appointment of Librarian.

Shortly after the appointment of the committee, and before any expenditure for library purposes has been sanctioned, the office of librarian should be filled, or an experienced librarian appointed as adviser. Librarianship has a technical side for which special training is necessary, and without this training no one is qualified to take up the position. The choice of a librarian should be determined solely on the ground of the efficiency of candidates for the post. To obtain the best selection of candidates a full notice of the vacancy should be advertised in the Athenæum, which is the recognised medium for such advertisements, and through which the post would be brought under the notice of all desirable candidates. If it be proposed to advertise in the local press it should be stipulated that previous experience in library work is an essential condition of the appointment.

In the smaller of those districts for which this pamphlet has been issued, say those where it is not possible to offer a salary exceeding £80 per annum, the appointment of a librarian in the organising stage of the work will generally be undesirable, as such a salary will not be sufficient to attract a librarian of the requisite experience. Here it will be more economical to call in a consulting librarian to assist the committee to determine the broad lines upon which the library is to be established and administered, and to make arrangements for carrying these into effect. The Council of the Library Association is prepared to submit the names of librarians who are willing to act in this capacity on the payment of an agreed fee, and would generally be able to submit the name of one within easy distance of any given district. When the scheme of administration has been settled in consultation with an expert it will be time to proceed to the appointment of librarian. Where local conditions render the appointment of a local untrained candidate imperative, it is strongly recommended that he should be called upon before taking up his duties to serve for as long a period as possible in some public library of repute. The committee would do well to offer an inducement to their librarian to pass as early as possible the Library Association Professional Examinations by offering an increased salary upon his obtaining the Certificates or the Diploma of the Association.

Buildings.

As indicated earlier, before even the planning of a new building is proceeded with, the librarian or expert adviser should be appointed. He would advise the committee regarding the accommodation which it would be desirable to provide, and possible to maintain with the available funds In rural districts it is essential, unless provision be made by gift for higher expenditure, that the cost of buildings, furniture and fittings be kept as low as possible. A competent architectural assessor should be appointed on the nomination of the Royal Institute of British Architects to draw up the conditions of competition and to report to the committee

on the plans submitted. The sizes of the rooms required should be included in the conditions, and would be given to the assessor by the committee on the advice of the librarian. A limited competition is recommended, but it should include at least two or three architects who have previously planned and carried out designs for library buildings. A one-storey building is strongly recommended, and a site should be obtained if possible of sufficient size to allow of such a building being erected, and subsequently extended should it be found necessary to do this.

The Reading Habit.

It cannot be too strongly laid down that in rural districts especially, the principal efforts of the library committee should be directed towards inculcating and stimulating the habit of reading, both for recreation and mental improvement. The mere acquisition of books and their display in a public building will not of itself be sufficient to effect this. Free lectures, reading circles and associations for the study of the local flora, fauna, geology, history and antiquities might be gradually introduced as occasion offers. Such associations should be permitted to hold their meetings on the library premises, subject to the condition that the library is officially represented on their committees.

Selection of Books.

The books, magazines and newspapers should be carefully selected from their educational and literary standpoint, and the standard should be kept as high as possible. The percentage of fiction acquired should be kept low and its selection restricted to the works of the greater writers. Various works are published which serve as aids to book-selection, and some of these should be obtained for the use of the committee and librarian before the selection for purchase is made. It is also wise to prepare a full list of the books required before commencing to purchase, and the list should be representative of all branches of knowledge and literature.

Classification.

It is desirable that the books in the library should be classified according to one or other of the recognised published systems. Where readers are allowed direct access to the shelves instruction should be given in the using of the system adopted. The location of the various classes of books should be clearly indicated by shelf labels, framed notices and other guides.

Catalogues.

Every library should possess a printed, typewritten or manuscript catalogue of its entire collection in dictionary form (that is, in one alphabetical arrangement of authors and subjects) or in two separate alphabetical arrangements of authors and subjects. Lists of additions may generally be published in the local press free of cost, and it is often desirable to issue special class-lists from time to time. If it be thought desirable to print the library catalogue, a manuscript catalogue in addition should be kept up-to-date in one of the above forms.

Reference Libraries.

The reference library will include a good selection of quick-reference books (dictionaries, atlases, directories and the like) for use on the library premises only. Apart from this provision, the cost of reference books will often deter committees from much expenditure on these, and it is better to make as little distinction as possible between books which may or may not be borrowed for home reading. The reference library should be built up slowly and carefully, and such works as are purchased should be readily accessible. It is anticipated that new legislation may give to county authorities the power to form large reference libraries for the purpose of supplementing the local libraries. Meanwhile it is not desirable for individual library committees to expend a disproportionate amount in the formation of a large reference library at the expense of the more popular lending library.

Library Exchanges and Subscription Libraries.

By the adoption of the system of inter-library exchanges a library can materially increase the stock of books available for its readers at call. Federation on these lines is undoubtedly desirable. The catalogues of the federated libraries must of course be placed open to inspection, and when a book is obtained from another library it is usual for the borrower to pay the cost of carriage.

An alternative plan for placing within the reach of students works beyond the means of the library, is to connect the local library with one of the larger subscription libraries. In such case the catalogue of the subscription library should be readily accessible and the facilities, thus offered, advertised.

Local Collections.

The reference library should include a collection of local books, pamphlets, prints, newspapers, maps and cuttings. This essential feature of a public library should be started without delay, and the items in the collection very carefully preserved.

Children's Libraries.

In organising libraries the requirements of the young should receive special consideration. It is to them that the library committee must look for its future readers, and it will often be through them that the parents will be induced to take an interest in books. As a rule it will be more economical for children's libraries to be placed in the school building under the supervision of the teacher, but advantage should be taken of the experience of the librarian and library committee in the selection of the books and in the administration of the school library, even though it be controlled by the education authority. Under present conditions the best arrangement for school libraries is for the education authority to finance them and the library committee to administer them, though it is desirable that the teachers should be responsible for the books while they are in the school, for the lending of them to the children and for their due return. Where the needs of the district seem to require it, there is no objection to the provision of libraries for children both in the school and the public library, provided that there is a mutual understanding between the two authorities.

Gifts.

While it is desirable to stimulate local generosity by advertising the willingness of the library committee to accept books as gifts or on loan, there should be a clear definition of the class of work it is hoped to acquire. This can be done by asking for definite works or the works of specific writers. The local press is generally willing to acknowledge the receipt of such gifts in their columns as well as to insert lists of books added to the library. Offers of undesirable gifts might be accepted, but with the reservation that the committee retains full power to dispose of them as may be deemed proper.

Bookbinding.

The question of binding public library books is one of great importance. The work needs to be specially done and should not be entrusted to a binder inexperienced in this particular class of binding.

All bookbinding specifications should stipulate that leathers used by the binder are to be of the Society of Arts standard (acid free, etc.), and that the binding should be in accordance generally with the Report of the Society of Arts. Sample books of "Standard" leathers may be seen at the Association's Library at the London School of Economics, Clare Market, London, W.C.

The Library Association.

It is desirable that the chairman of the library committee and the librarian should become members of the Library Association for the purpose of keeping in touch with its work, and with the development of the library movement generally. The Association publishes a magazine monthly (The Library Association Record), holds monthly meetings in London, branch meetings in various parts of the country, and an annual meeting, generally in some provincial town. The Association also maintains a lending library of

professional literature. Further information regarding the work of the Association is given opposite the title-page, and particulars as to membership may be had on application to the Assistant Secretary, 24 Whitcomb Street, London, W.C.

Public Education and Public Libraries.

As an outcome of a long series of meetings and of a special conference of library and educational authorities, important resolutions on this subject were adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association at Cambridge in 1905. As the Library Association strongly advises cooperation between public library committees and other educational bodies, it has been thought well to set out again these resolutions, which are as follows:—

- I. In order that children from an early age may become accustomed to the use of a collection of books, it is desirable (a) that special libraries for children should be established in all public libraries, and (b) that collections of books should be formed in all elementary and secondary schools.
- 2. That the principal text-books and auxiliaries recommended by various teaching bodies, including those directing technical studies, as well as University Extension centres, the National Home-Reading Union, etc., be provided and kept up to date in the public library.
- 3. That the public librarian should keep in touch with the chief educational work in his area.
- 4. That conferences between teachers and librarians be held from time to time.
- 5. That there should be some interchange of representation between the library and education committees.
- 6. That the public library should be recognised as forming part of the national educational machinery.

Books Recommended.

The following is a list of books which give fuller information regarding the various branches of library work referred to in this pamphlet:—

GENERAL.

Brown, J. D. Manual of library economy. Revised edition. 1907. Libraco, Ltd. 8s. 6d. net.

Some Notes for the Guidance of Library Committees. 15

LEGISLATION.

CHAMBERS, G. F., and H. W. FOVARGUE. Law relating to public libraries and museums and literary and scientific institutions. Fourth edition. 1899. Knight. 10s. 6d.

Supplemented by the later Acts of Parliament as follows:-

London Government Act, 1800 (62 and 63 Vict. Chap. 14).

Public Libraries Act, 1901 (1 Edw. 7, Chap. 19).

Public Libraries (Ireland) Act, 1902 (2 Edw. 7, Chap. 20).

BUILDINGS AND FITTINGS.

BURGOYNE, F. J. Library construction, architecture, fittings and furniture. 1897. G. Allen. 6s. net.

CHAMPNEYS, A. L. Public libraries: a treatise on their design, construction and fittings, etc. 1907. Batsford. 12s. 6d. net.

SELECTION OF BOOKS.

BAKER, E. A. History in fiction. 2 vols. 1907. Routledge. 5s. net.

English catalogue of books. Issued yearly. Sampson Low. 6s. net.

Kroeger, A. B. Guide to the study and use of reference books. 1908. A.L.A. Publishing Board. Boston, U.S.A. \$1.50.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. Class-list of best books. 3 vols. 1905-8. In progress. Libraco, Ltd. Vol. 1, 1s. net; vols. 2 and 3, 1s. 6d. net each.

ROBERTSON, J. M., ed. Courses of study. 1904. Watts & Co. 8s. 6d. net.

Sonnenschein, W. S. Best books: a reader's guide to the choice of the best available books. 1894. Sonnenschein. 31s. 6d. net.

—— Reader's guide to contemporary literature, being the first supplement to the Best books. 1895. Sonnenschein. 25s. net. New edition in preparation. The Times literary supplement. Issued weekly with The Times.

BOOKBINDING.

COCKERELL, D. Bookbinding and the care of books. 1906. Hogg. 5s. net. LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. Leather for libraries. 1905. Libraco, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net. Society of Arts. Report of the committee on leather for bookbinding. 1905. Bell & Sons. 10s. 6d. net.

PERIODICALS.

The Library. 1899. In progress. Quarterly. 24s. net. per annum.

Library Assistant; the Official Organ of the Library Assistants' Association. 1898. In progress. Monthly. 4s. per annum.

Library Association Record. 1899. In progress. Monthly. 24s. per annum.

Library World. In progress. Monthly. 7s. per annum.

Literary Year-book and Bookman's Directory. 1908. Issued yearly. Routledge. 5s. net.

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